

An Introduction to High Quality Professional Development for Teachers



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Each educator deserves the opportunity to participate in high quality professional development that will result in higher levels of student achievement. *Designs for Learning* to which this booklet is a brief introduction, provides the framework for designing such high quality professional development. Based on ten Design Elements, *Designs for Learning* is a resource to help teachers develop and implement a professional development plan that will significantly affect what they do in the classroom and make a difference in their ability to help all students reach high standards.

The *Designs for Learning* materials do not offer a recipe. Instead, the ten Design Elements represent parts of a system, and, as such, are intimately linked to each other so that one leads to the other. No matter where you start, you realize quite soon that you are addressing all of the Elements. That is, you have designed a system for planning and implementing professional development.

Designs for Learning is based on three guiding principles:

1. High quality professional development helps teachers to more ably address the learning needs of every student, thereby improving the learning of all students.
2. High quality professional development designs will vary in accordance with the different phases of a teacher's development. Beginning teachers generally need support in terms of content and pedagogy, with attention to receiving guidance from experienced teachers. Experienced teachers' needs center on deepening knowledge of the standards and expanding their repertoire of instructional strategies, with attention to collaborative work with other teachers. Accomplished teachers' needs include finding ways to convey their knowledge and experience to others, with attention to developing even further their leadership skills.
3. As is the case with teachers, administrators and policymakers who are actively involved in their own learning are better able to create and support conditions that result in high levels of teacher competency and student achievement.

The ten Design Elements for High Quality Professional Development, shown on the following pages, are central to the teaching and learning process for teachers and, subsequently, to improved learning for their students.

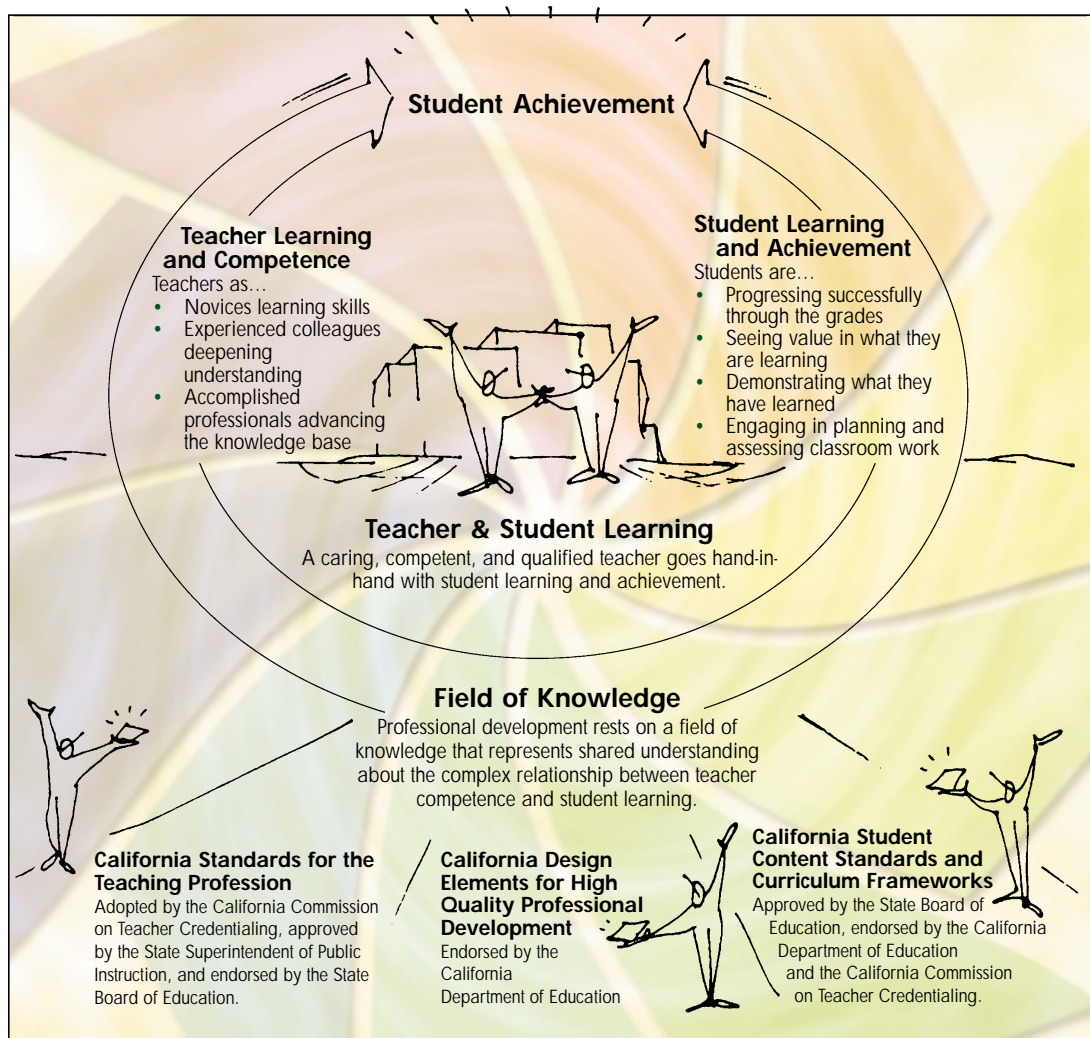
"Teachers need more time that's structured into their workday to talk with each other, observe each other, and work on specific issues and areas that relate to how well or how poorly their students are achieving. Conferences and one-day inservices don't do it! Whatever growth is made should be sustained over time as you continue to meet and dialogue with colleagues."

—Middle School Math Teacher

Designs for Learning

The California Context

Professional development in California rests on a field of knowledge about the complex relationship between teacher learning and student learning. This field of knowledge includes the California academic content standards and curriculum frameworks and the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP). As such, *Designs for Learning* is intended to provide a bridge between what students should know and be able to do—the academic content standards—and what teachers should know and be able to do as defined by the curriculum frameworks and CSTP.



The California academic content standards and curriculum frameworks can be ordered and downloaded at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/cdepress/>
You may also call 1-800-995-4099 to order standards and frameworks.

The California Academic Content Standards and Curriculum Frameworks

In California, the State Board of Education has adopted rigorous content standards in reading/language arts, mathematics, science, and history/social science. The alignment of curriculum frameworks, instructional materials, and state and local assessments, when completed, will provide a coherent system with clear expectations of what is to be taught and learned.

The most important element in a standards-based system is a highly qualified teacher workforce, well-prepared to meet the academic needs of California's highly diverse student

for Professional Development

population. University teacher preparation programs, district induction programs, and ongoing professional development all must support standards-based instruction and the belief that all students are capable of reaching high standards.

What do teachers need to know and be able to do in a standards-based system? First of all, they need to be well-acquainted with the content standards themselves. In some instances, particularly at the elementary level, teachers need opportunities for college-level study to learn the disciplines of mathematics, science, and history before they can successfully teach these subjects to their students. Next, teachers need time and assistance to revise their current instructional units, so that the standards are embedded in the curriculum and classroom assessments measure student achievement. Finally, teachers need to learn a variety of new strategies to support underachieving students, particularly English learners. Acquiring all of this new knowledge and skill cannot happen without sufficient time, long-range planning, and understanding of high quality professional development as described in *Designs for Learning*

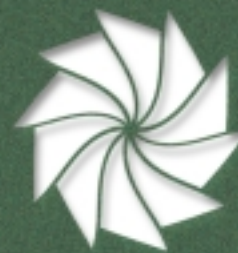
The newly adopted California curriculum frameworks provide a blueprint for revising curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Ongoing learning opportunities that are embedded in the regular workday are necessary if teachers are to change their practice. Teachers may meet in study groups or in grade-level teams to explore sections of the frameworks and to assess their knowledge and expectations for students' performance. Examining student work is a powerful way for teachers to learn how students achieve the standards and what additional instructional support is needed. Based on these conversations, teachers may then develop lessons together. Releasing teachers with more experience or expertise to coach and mentor colleagues is also effective. If it is determined that there are areas of weakness across the school, this information can inform the professional development plan so that all teachers have adequate preparation to teach the standards at a high level.

Holding teachers accountable to teach the standards is an important step on the way to bringing all students to increased levels of achievement. This goal can only be reached with high quality teacher preparation and ongoing professional development on the part of every educator.

The California Standards for the Teaching Profession




The CSTP are based on current research pertaining to best teaching practices. The standards address the diversity of students and teachers in California and highlight teaching as a profession in which there is a continuum of growth from novice to expert.

The CSTP support the creation of inclusive classrooms in which diverse students with varying learning styles and abilities are engaged and challenged as learners. The standards also value the diversity of teachers' backgrounds, perspectives, skills, knowledge, and practices. Teaching is not a profession in which a single approach will be effective for all practitioners. Although the standards articulate a common vision of excellence in teaching that spans grade levels and subject areas, different teachers have different ways to meet the standards effectively. By respecting the diverse ways in which teachers pursue excellence in professional practice, schools enrich and enhance the education of diverse students.





The CSTP are designed to be used by teachers to:

-  Prompt reflection about student learning and teaching practice.
-  Formulate professional goals to improve teaching practice.
-  Guide, monitor, and assess the progress of a teacher's practice toward professional goals and professionally accepted benchmarks.

The *Developmental Scales Continuum*, a tool developed to support the use of the CSTP, makes it possible for teachers to obtain accurate, reliable information about their developmental levels in relation to each standard. Also based on CSTP, the California Formative Assessment and Support System for Teachers (CFASST) has developed *Descriptions of Practice* (DOPs) to support teachers during the induction period and throughout their teaching careers. To obtain more information about these tools and programs, please contact your regional Professional Development Consortium (see page 8) or call the Professional Development Office at CDE at (916) 657-5463.

An abbreviated version of the California Standards for the Teaching Profession follows on the next page.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

In addition to the CSTP, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) has issued a set of teaching standards that describe the *accomplished* level of teaching for different subject areas and grade levels. Advanced professional certification, such as that offered by the NBPTS, offers teachers the opportunity to show their mastery of teaching and receive honor, recognition, and financial rewards for it.

For each of the certificate areas, NBPTS offers a performance-based assessment that takes about one year to complete. The year-long assessment process includes two components: (1) a portfolio, which includes videotapes of classroom instruction, profiles of students and the teachers' interaction with their work, and reflective narratives on the goals and methods of their teaching; and (2) a one-day set of essay examinations. It does take a considerable amount of time—one teacher said she spent about 180 hours going over student work, reviewing videotapes, and “writing, writing, writing.”

Recognizing the value of the certification process, several states, including California, are offering financial awards for teachers who receive national certification. Currently, certified teachers are eligible to receive a one-time award of \$10,000. In addition, a federal subsidy to cover one-half of the application costs is also available to some candidates (candidates are randomly selected from the list of those who apply). Efforts are underway to expand the subsidies and incentive awards so that more teachers will participate in this national certification process. For more specific information about how to apply for these programs, please see the professional development web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/nbpts.html>.

To obtain an application for National Board Certification, please contact NBPTS at 1-800-22TEACH.

California Standards for the Teaching Profession

STANDARD ONE

Engaging and supporting all students in learning

- 1-1** Connecting students' prior knowledge, life experience, and interests with learning goals
- 1-2** Using a variety of instructional strategies and resources to respond to students' diverse needs
- 1-3** Facilitating learning experiences that promote autonomy, interaction, and choice
- 1-4** Engaging students in problem solving, critical thinking, and other activities that make subject matter meaningful
- 1-5** Promoting self-directed, reflective learning for all students

STANDARD THREE

Understanding and organizing subject matter for student learning

- 3-1** Demonstrating knowledge of subject matter content and student development
- 3-2** Organizing curriculum to support student understanding of subject matter
- 3-3** Interrelating ideas and information within and across subject matter areas
- 3-4** Developing student understanding through instructional strategies that are appropriate to the subject matter
- 3-5** Using materials, resources, and technologies to make subject matter accessible to students

STANDARD FIVE

Assessing student learning

- 5-1** Establishing and communicating learning goals for all students
- 5-2** Collecting and using multiple sources of information to assess student learning
- 5-3** Involving and guiding all students in assessing their own learning
- 5-4** Using the results of assessments to guide instruction
- 5-5** Communicating with students, families, and other audiences about student progress

STANDARD TWO

Creating and maintaining effective environments for student learning

- 2-1** Creating a physical environment that engages all students
- 2-2** Establishing a climate that promotes fairness and respect
- 2-3** Promoting social development and group responsibility
- 2-4** Establishing and maintaining standards for student behavior
- 2-5** Planning and implementing classroom procedures and routines that support student learning
- 2-6** Using instructional time effectively

STANDARD FOUR

Planning instruction and designing learning experiences for all students

- 4-1** Drawing on and valuing students' backgrounds, interests, and developmental learning needs
- 4-2** Establishing and articulating goals for student learning
- 4-3** Developing and sequencing instructional activities and materials for student learning
- 4-4** Designing short-term and long-term plans to foster student learning
- 4-5** Modifying instructional plans to adjust for student needs

STANDARD SIX

Developing as a professional educator

- 6-1** Reflecting on teaching practice and planning professional development
- 6-2** Establishing professional goals and pursuing opportunities to grow professionally
- 6-3** Working with communities to improve professional practice
- 6-4** Working with families to improve professional practice
- 6-5** Working with colleagues to improve professional practice





Acknowledgments for *Designs for Learning*

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The Design Elements for High Quality Professional Development

1. **Uses student performance and achievement data, including student feedback, teacher observation, analysis of student work and test scores, as part of the process for individual and organizational learning.**

Sources of data and information include the results and outcomes from multiple forms of assessment. In addition, information about the students' cultural context and learning history is included. The purpose of using a variety of data sources is for teachers to know their students well, and then to use that knowledge to plan professional development that will increase students' learning.

2. **Uses a coherent, long-term professional development planning process, connected to the school plan, that reflects both site-based priorities and individual learning needs.**

Professional development planning is an ongoing process that is closely linked to other planning activities at the site—those that take place for Program Quality Review, Focus on Learning, school improvement, and various initiatives. Plans and initiatives are linked systemically and overlap with whole school goals. The planning process is ongoing and changes are made as a result of teacher feedback and formative evaluation of teacher learning.

3. **Provides time for professional learning to occur in a meaningful manner.**

Time is the greatest stumbling block for providing relevant and timely high quality learning opportunities for teachers—time to plan, reflect, design lessons together, and examine and make meaning of content and teaching standards. Teachers need time both on-site and away from school to pursue learning opportunities.

4. **Respects and encourages the leadership development of teachers.**

There are a variety of leadership roles for teachers: planning/governance at the site, mentoring new teachers, acting as consulting teachers, coordinating alliances and learning networks among teachers, developing curriculum, and advising district and state policymakers. *The California Standards for the Teaching Profession* (CSTP) and the *National Board for Professional Teaching Standards* (NBPTS) inform local districts about ways to develop leadership roles that will model high standards for teaching.

5. **Develops, refines, and expands teachers' pedagogical repertoire, content knowledge, and the skill to integrate both.**

Professional development strategies such as workshops, institutes, networks, and academies, as well as job-embedded activities, are related to the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession* (CSTP) and are helpful in closing the achievement gap between the highest- and lowest-performing groups of students.

6. **Provides for and promotes the use of continuous inquiry and reflection.**

Through inquiry and reflection, teachers come to understand content standards, self-assess their teaching with respect to the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession* (CSTP) and examine beliefs and assumptions that impede their success with students. Strategies for ongoing inquiry and reflection include: participation in action research, creating teaching portfolios, keeping journals, examining student work and student data, reflecting with a colleague or coach, and conducting studies of individual students.

7. **Provides for collaboration and collegial work, balanced with opportunities for individual learning.**

A collaborative learning culture is central to the professional development enterprise and is characterized by activities such as: study groups, joint planning and problem solving, peer coaching, interdisciplinary or team teaching, and sharing learning from off-site trainings or from participation in alliances and networks. All of these activities are ongoing and help individual teachers address their personal learning plans and, at the same time, extend the learning to others at the site.

The Design Elements, continued

8. Follows the principles of good teaching and learning, including providing comfortable, respectful environments conducive to adult learning.

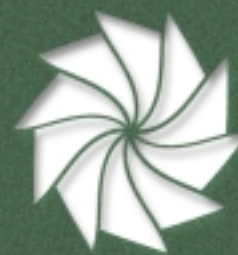
The conditions that support powerful learning for adults include attending to what is learned, how it is learned, and where it is learned. The Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) is one strategy for determining teachers' levels of concern and, subsequently, designing appropriate learning strategies.

9. Creates broad-based support of professional development from all sectors of the organization and community through reciprocal processes for providing information and soliciting feedback.

Partnerships with parents, community members, and institutions and agencies in the broader community can provide important resources for teachers and administrators. Understanding and support for professional development, both within the educational community and with the public, can be built through communication, information sharing, and mutual respect and trust.

10. Builds in accountability practices and evaluation of professional development programs to provide a foundation for future planning.

Evaluation of professional development programs at the school site are conducted within a framework that includes: data and knowledge about students (Design Element 1), reference to the overall school plan and goals (Design Element 2), and existing state and district policies and resources (Design Element 9). Program evaluation is also referenced against teaching standards and student content standards. Every aspect of teacher learning is linked to student learning.



Jigsaw Activity to Introduce the Design Elements

Purpose: To assist a school team in using the Design Elements to plan and implement professional development

Setting: School site, 1.5 hours, whole faculty or group of 15–50 individuals seated in groups of ten (called “home groups”)

Materials: These two pages, ideally supplemented by the *Designs for Learning* Field Guide for Teachers' Professional Development and other materials related to school planning

Process:

1. Facilitator introduces *Designs for Learning* and gives a summary of why this information is important for planning professional development.
2. Participants number off 1–10. Instruct #1's to sit together, #2's, and so forth. Assign each group a Design Element on which they will become expert.
3. Expert groups, seated together, read and review material and information related to the Design Element they've been assigned. For 20 minutes, discuss:
 - a) What are the key ideas in this Element that will help us to develop a high quality professional development plan?
 - b) What linkages do we see of this element to the others?
4. Re-form home groups. For 20 minutes, discuss:
 - a) How have we designed professional development in the past?
 - b) How do the Design Elements influence how we should design and implement professional development to meet our teaching and learning goals?
5. Home groups share with the whole group. What are the implications for our planning?

Please see Page 8
of this booklet for
more information
about how to order
the *Designs
for Learning*
System.



For more information,
please contact your
regional **Professional
Development
Consortium**:

Region 1–North Coast
(707) 524-2827

Region 2–North State
(530) 527-5811, Ext. 376

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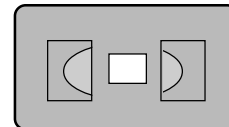
e-mail: ntc@zzyx.ucsc.edu

The *Designs for Learning* materials, available in a separate kit, have been created to lead educators away from “one-shot, inservice training” toward a deeper, more comprehensive approach that leads to improvement in teaching and student learning. These materials are grounded in the ten Design Elements and are intended to provide a foundation for high quality professional development.

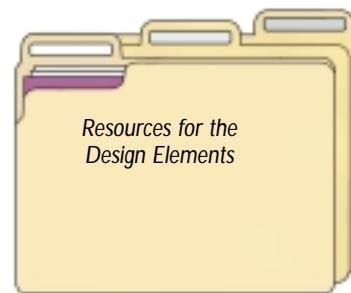
The *Designs* for *Learning* System



Binder: 175 pp.



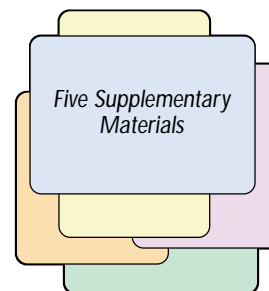
Video



11 Folders



Booklet: 8 pp.



Five Supplementary
Materials